AUM

The Kings of Light have departed in wrath. The sins of men have become so black that earth quivers in her great agony * * The azure seats remain empty. Who of the brown, who of the red, or yet among the black, races, can sit in the seats of the blessed, the seats of knowledge and mercy ? Who can assume the flower of power, the plant of the golden stem and the azure blossom ?—*Secret Doctrine, vol.* 2.

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A Survey of Sanskrit.

As the study of Aryan literature is one of the declared objects of the T. S., there is little need of apology in offering some remarks about the Sanskrit language and what may be done with it by those who at the outset are totally unacquainted with it. There are several degrees of perfection in the acquisition of a strange language, from the stage at which one knows a word or two up to the condition of the perfect scholar who makes no mistakes, who writes correctly and converses fluently. Between these two extremes there is a stage which is not nearly half-way if measured by the toil necessary to reach it, and yet much more than half the whole journey if measured according to the fruits and advantages derived from its attainment. It is a stage which includes a general notion of the language in question, and sufficient knowledge of the forms of words for one to be capable of using a lexicon or referring to a grammar in case of necessity,

(for even this implies a certain degree of knowledge). It may be fairly well defined as the stage in which the student, when supplied with the translation of the passage before him, is able to understand how such a meaning is contained in the passage, which word means what, and so forth.

Applying this to Sanskrit, a person who has before him the "red silk" Bhagavad-Gita and also some tolerably faithful translation would be able to make out *how* the sense given in the English version was contained in the original. This degree of knowledge places valuable powers in the student's hands. Give him the text and the translation, and he will be practically on a par with the full-fledged scholar; indeed he may even have the advantage over the ordinary Oriental professor, because his theosophical information will give him the key to certain expressions which altogether baffle the professor. He will also be able to keep a check upon the unconscientious translator who weaves his own notions and interpretations, and possibly his own emotions also, into the substance of the text, without warning the reader that he has done so.

There is no doubt that learning Sanskrit becomes possible for the devotee when the toil would not be endurable for the same person apart from his devotedness. On the other hand we not unfrequently hear of people applying themselves to Sanskrit and afterwards turning away in despair and disgust. They had not expected to find half a line and sometimes a whole one strung together without any separation between the words. How can they reach the meaning of the phrase before them when they cannot unravel the words themselves, nor even count how many there are? And then, again, there is the Sanskrit alphabet to learn. Schoolboys sometimes enjoy the fun of a new alphabet; they are eager to write their names in the new character, be it Greek or German. But with grown-up people whose objects and motives are of a less playful sort, a new alphabet to learn is a labor which severely taxes their patience. And when they have learnt what they regard as the alphabet, they find that even this is not all, but that there are any number of *combinations* or compound letters still to be mastered. The remedy for all this is that people should learn Sanskrit in a transliterated form. Sanskrit may still be Sanskrit as much as ever, though printed in Roman character, and it would be unnecessary to assert the fact, were it not that, through some fault in modern education, we have grown up to regard the printed page as language in its essence, whilst actual speech (of which writing is really but the handmaid) is despised as empty and transient.

Some people appear to have a sentiment of worship towards the Devanâgarî character; this may be very well, but it must not be carried too far. A word or two about this form of writing might have a salutary effect besides being generally instructive. Devanagari bears the marks of being

a very *primitive* method of writing ; it is not by any means a perfect system in all respects, but is capable of being improved upon just as much as primitive knives or primitive water-jars. What these possible improvements are may now be explained. There is one which suggests itself immediately, and that is the separation of individual words, or, we might even say, the separation of every *sentence* from the one which follows, for even this is not fulfilled. As an example, take a line from the *Bhagavad-Gita*, Chap. 2, v. 13, the meaning of which is,—"So comes the attainment of another body ; the wise man in this is not deluded." The Sanskrit words are:—

Tathâ deh'-ântara-prâptir ; dhîras tatra na muhyati.

Now this line, in the Devanagari text, is so knotted together that there is not even a gap left at the place where the semicolon has been placed, but the word *prâptir* runs on into the first word of the following sentence. The appearance of the line may be faithfully represented as follows :—

Tathâ dehântaraprâptirdhîrastatra na muhyati.

Now let us examine this line. The first word means "so," and is properly set apart. Then follows a compound word *deh'-ântara-prâptir* including three members which mean respectively "body," "the second," "attainment" ; as the three parts form a single composite word, we ought not to complain much of the absence of divisions. But why is not *prâptir* separated from *dhîras ?* The reason is, that by the Devanagari system the final *r* of *prâptir* is written *overhead* of the *dh*, like a little boy mounted on his father's shoulder, so that a fore and aft separation is impossible. Once more, we might ask, why is *dhîras* joined with *tatra?* Because space can be saved by the use of a monogram for *st.* Yes, this saving of space or condensation is the explanation of a good deal that is met with, and it goes far to justify the application of the word *primitive* to this method of writing.

Sanskrit written in this ancient and primitive style ought not to be regarded as a readable text like the lines of a newspaper-column, which deliver their meaning at once as the eye glides over them, but much more as a condensed record of speech. The Sanskrit text would always supply with certainty what the failing memory had lost, in the case of hymns or other verses frequently recited ; and one could read it aloud fluently and with intelligence, provided the matter to be read were familiar beforehand. It stands very much in the same position as a letter from some friend who writes an illegible hand ; the receiver of the letter can manage it pretty well the second time over. Indeed, the illegible letter is not a bad comparison, for as such letters often contain some word which baffles everybody who tries to decipher it, so the Sanskrit student will not unfrequently meet with some new character, probably a compound, the value of which he cannot determine with confidence.

Learned men with knitted brows inform us that Devanagari is a "syl-

labic" method of writing. There is rather too much learning in the world just now; what we want is a little enlightenment instead of it. We want the enlightenment of a simple heart and clear mind. A single Devanagari character, it is true, may represent as much of a word as two, three, or four letters in the Roman style, and the words may be described as written in little blocks or portions; these portions, however, are not syllables. To explain the matter by examples, the word *janma* (birth) would be written in two blocks, Ja-NMa, and *vaktra* (mouth) would be Va-KTRa. Again, *sattwa* (goodness) would appear as Sa-TTWa, whilst the words *rajas tamas* (passion, darkness) occurring together would be written Ra-Ja-STa-Ma' (the apostrophe represents the final *s*). The reader will see from the examples how incorrect and misleading it would be to describe these blocks as "syllables." It is no use attempting to read the words block by block; the method does not answer, and is not likely to. In all the preceding instances the capital letters alone would be represented in the Sanskrit text; the vowels marked here are not really shown at all. For, as in our modern methods of shorthand writing, so in Sanskrit, chief importance is given to the consonants, the vowels being generally mere adjuncts; each of the blocks which go to compose a word is a group of consonants, the first of which probably belongs to the syllable behind, whilst a fresh syllable is commenced by those which follow. The block extends as far as the vowel of the syllable newly commenced (which in many cases is the end of the syllable); if the dull sound of the common vowel (transcribed as *a*) is intended to be that of the syllable, no sign at all is added, but any special tone such as that of *ee* or *oo* is indicated by a proper sign attached to the block. To meet the case of a word beginning with a vowel (such as the names Arjuna, Indra,) there are special block-characters for each vowel tone, to be used on such occasions; and likewise when a consonant stands at the end of a word as the conclusion of the syllable, a stroke is placed after it to show that this is so and that such a consonant is not to be pronounced with the "common vowel" as a further syllable.

The "block system" by which Sanskrit is written is very effective in saving paper and ink, but it makes the text more troublesome to read. The difficulty in reading is further increased by two points of irregularity in the Devanagari system which shall now be mentioned. In a perfect system of writing, the different signs would follow one another in the order of their utterance, but this law is broken in the case of short *i* in Sanskrit. For although pronounced after everything else in the block to which it is attached, it is written at the *beginning* of the block. Thus the Sanskrit word *kim* (what) appears in the form IK-M. This is bad enough when the block is a single *k*, as here; but when the block is of larger extent, this displacement of the vowel *i* is much more confusing. Consider the combination

yasmin sthito (wherein existing); its form would be Ya-ISM-INSTh-TO! In this instance the *i* of *sthito* has obtained an earlier position than the *n* of the preceding word *yasmin*.

This is enough on the displacement of *i*; the other irregularity mentioned may be described as the *displacement of r*. Such words as "far-mer" and "Ports-mouth" exemplify a certain function of the consonant *r* in language generally; when thus employed, its place in the syllable is immediately after the vowel to which it forms a terminal, so to speak. The function here performed by *r* is different from that which it performs in such a word as "France," where, on the contrary, the *r* is the immediate *forerunner* of vocal sound. Now in Sanskrit words of the same pattern as "farmer," it will be seen that the *r* would naturally form the first member of a block of consonants; but as a fact the *r* is excluded from the block; it is written *overhead*, at the further extremity of the block and almost beyond the block. Whatever marks or pointings may be written above that block, the *r* takes its place beyond them all. This overhead *r* is different in form from the *r* used in writing *Râma*, and is like an apostrophe turned the wrong way. Thus the familiar word *karma* looks something like Ka-M^{r}a. Or to take a stronger instance of the displacement of *r*, the words *mûrdhni âdhâya*, (in-the-head fixing) assume the form Mû-DhNY^{r}-ADhAYa. This phrase occurs in the *Bhagavad-Gita*, Chap. 8, v. 12; a worse case could hardly be found. It should be explained that the *i* of *mûrdhni* has become converted into a consonant *y* and thus entered into partnership with the consonants *Dh* and *N* to form a block. It is not at all uncommon for both instances of displacement to occur together. The word *nirvâna* would be an instance; this in Sanskrit would stand as INV^{r}ANa. By a simultaneous displacement of the *i* and the *r*, these two letters which are properly next-door neighbors appear quite separated. The *r* is in Sanskrit exactly overhead of the V, and not to the right of it as here printed.

Our conclusions about Sanskrit may be summed up as follows, understanding that what is stated applies to the Devanagari letters and mode of writing. Sanskrit is not a readable text so much as a condensed record of speech, a shorthand which is at least short in space if not also short in time. Its defects are, that it does not maintain the separation of individual words, which makes the text difficult to read; and also that some of the signs are written out of their proper order. The latter defect causes trouble in writing as well as in reading, and it is only by great thoughtfulness, in writing *n' ânyat kinchid* (nothing else), that one can remember to insert the *i* of *kin* before the *t* of the *preceding word*. It is better at once to admit that Sanskrit is written in a barbarous fashion, and to begin planning our improvements forthwith. Nevertheless the term "barbarous" will appear hardly a just description when we consider how admirably the system fulfils

the purpose of ancient times for which it was designed. And, after all, there are worse things than primitive barbarity; what is there so foul in all the world as civilization with its sunless cities, its unnatural pressure of labor, its increase of disease and wretchedness and crime and poverty? But we must restrain such digressions from the subject.

We have now to consider systems of transliterating Sanskrit. In some of these everything is arranged with the most scholarly precision, but one all-important canon is quite overlooked, *viz.* that the sign used must not suggest the wrong sound. For instance, the Sanskrit word for *if*, pronounced "chate" (to rhyme with *hate*), is represented in one system by using an italic *k*, *k*et. In the same system *janma* (birth) is given as "*g*anma" with an italic *g*. How this system may suit a German is another question; but the learned Professor who devised the system was not in sympathy with the English-speaking nations. The pretext for using the italic *k* and *g* is that the Sanskrit consonants so represented are etymologically akin to the hard *k* and *g*. That may be; but it is scarcely the duty of an alphabet to teach us the past history of written forms and words.

Then again, an American Professor has adopted a plain *c* instead of an italic *k*, and writes *cet* to signify *chet*; accordingly *cha* (and) would be written *ca*. But unfortunately *ca* does not spell "cha"; it spells "ka." We might as well agree at once to spell the English word "chart" without the *h*; whatever persons of special training might see in it, every plain man would read the word *cart!*

When we come to apply a transcript form of Sanskrit to the purpose of separating the individual words, some difficulties present themselves which have yet to be mentioned. It is one of the peculiarities of Sanskrit that two adjacent words often actually coalesce, fusing their extremities together as it were. Thus the two words *na iha*, "not here," become *neha*. How are we to make two out of *neha* without robbing one or other constituent? Again *yathâ uktam*, "as said," becomes yathôktam; how can we deal with this? These are difficulties which follow us even when we have got free from Devanagari and taken to our more familiar Roman character. In the Sacred Books of the East, edited by Prof. Max Müller, there is a great deal of Sanskrit here and there, printed in Roman characters, but the separation of the words is restricted to such cases as *dhîras tatra*, when the words in their conjoint arrangement have preserved their natural form intact, without any fusion or intermixture having occurred. And yet what a pity that the work should cease here! By a little ingenuity a great deal more might be done to render Sanskrit approachable, and this without interfering with its essential character. Not only should the different words in every case be written separately, but also the component parts of compound words should be made distinct by the use of hyphens. By this latter practice the difficulty of Sanskrit is very greatly diminished.

The following specimen represents a few lines from the *Bhagavad-Gita.* It is taken from a M.S.S. in which the entire "Song Celestial" is thus transliterated. At the foot of it is given Sir Edwin Arnold's translation.
Bhagavad-gita. XIII, 7-11.

7. Amânitwam, adambhitwam, ahi*n*sâ, xântir, ârjavam,
Âchary'-opâsana*m*, çaucha*m*, sthairyam, âtma-vinigraha',
8. Indriy'-ârtheshu vairâgyam, an-ahankâra eva cha
Janma-m*r*tyu-jarâ-vyâdhi-du'kha-dosh'-ânudarçanam
9. Asaktir, an-abhi-shwanga' putra-dâra-g*r*h'-âdishu,
Nitya*m* cha sama-chittatwam isht'-ânisht'-opapattishu,
10. Mayi ch' ânanya-yogena bhaktir a-vyabhichârinî,
Vivikta-deça-sevitwam, a-ratir jana-sa*n*sadi,
11. Adhyâtma-dnâna-nityatwa*m*, tattwa-dnân'-ârtha-darçanam,
Etad DNÂNAM iti prôktam ; adnâna*m* yad ato 'nyathâ.

(Translation.)

7. Humbleness, truthfulness, and harmlessness,
Patience and honour, reverence for the wise,
Purity, constancy, control of self,
8. Contempt of sense delights, self-sacrifice,
Perception of the certitude of ill
In birth, death, age, disease, suffering, and sin,
9. Detachment, lightly holding unto home,
Children, and wife, and all that bindeth men,
An ever tranquil heart in fortunes good
And fortunes evil,
10. With a will set firm
To worship Me—Me only ! ceasing not ;
Loving all solitudes, and shunning noise
Of foolish crowds ;
11. Endeavors resolute
To reach perception of the Utmost Soul,
And grace to understand what gain it were
So to attain,—this is true WISDOM, Prince !
And what is otherwise is ignorance !

Meanwhile it is not only in connection with the "red silk Gita" that an acquaintance with Sanskrit is valuable. Why do not Theosophists break through their present estrangement towards Sanskrit, complaining as they do when Sanskrit terms are employed in the teaching delivered to them? With a little adaptation, all Sanskrit terms become extremely easy to pronounce, and it is far better to have fresh names for what are really fresh notions in our philosophy, instead of falling back upon English substitutes. People should pronounce *karma* as if it were written 'kerma' or 'körma',

and the word *dharma* accordingly. What could be easier? And yet the former word is persistently pronounced like that other word *kâma* (desire). It would really be much better to print the words just mentioned *kerma* and *dherma* respectively, when adopted into an English sentence. The mode of spelling the names in Roman letters is so unimportant a matter, whilst the preservation of the correct utterance is *not* an unimportant matter; we ought to adopt the spelling which is on the whole the most expressive of the proper sound, and so preserve the sacred language incorrupt. There would thus be two systems of writing Sanskrit in Roman character, the one exoteric or popular, the other esoteric or technical. The first would be used along with English text, the other in quotations—or in Sanskrit books as soon as there grows up a demand for them in this more readable form.

There is one other word which might be noticed, and that is the term *parabrahm.* The combination *ah* does not spell "ah" as conceived by English or German speakers, but is more to be compared with *ogh* in "Drogheda" or other Celtic words. How might it best be written in the popular style? Perhaps *parabra'hm* would convey as correct a notion as anything else, and without causing any misleading impression. The practical result of the final syllable should be "-brom", and this would be quite consistent with the spelling when we reflect on the sound of the word "yacht." The apostrophe in *parabra'hm* might be regarded either as a mere instrument for disconnecting the *a* and the *h*, or as the suggestion of a *g*, which one would have felt too great a license if actually inserted.

E. ALDRED WILLIAMS.

ONE TOUCH OF NATURE.

[READ BEFORE THE ARYAN T. S., APRIL 2, 1889.]

In the famous speech of Ulysses in the third act of Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida* occurs the often-quoted line, "One touch of nature makes the whole world kin." It is a curious fact, and one on the whole redounding to the credit of humanity, that the line is *never* quoted in the sense in which Ulysses uses it. He is speaking of the readiness of mankind to forget past benefits, and to prize the glitter of a specious present rather than the true gold of that which has gone by. "The present eye praises the present object," says the wise old Greek, and there is *one* touch of nature that makes the whole world kin, that is, men's fondness for praising that which is new, though it be gilded dust, rather than that which is ancient, though it be gold that is somewhat dusty. "Then marvel not," he says to Achilles, "that all the Greeks begin to worship Ajax."

Curiously enough, the line is always quoted as exemplifying the sympathy that, once awakened, makes men feel their close relationship to each

other.[1] "Nature" is taken as meaning fellow-feeling, one touch of which makes us all brothers. This unconscious misinterpretation, or rather misapplication, of the great poet's words shows us how innate the conviction is of the fact of our universal brotherhood.

We recognise it as our *nature*, and one throb of fellow-feeling brings the truth home to our awakened consciousness. The touch of sympathy, like the spear of Ithuriel, instantly dispels the illusion of the senses; it lifts us from the purely terrestrial plane, the life of every day, with its apparent gulfs and abysses of worldly circumstance set between soul and soul, to that higher region where we see the non-reality of these separations; where we *feel*, in all those moments that call out the deeper nature of every human being, that the one great pulse of the universe throbs through all our veins. An intellectual conviction of the necessary identity of spirit will never go half so far towards convincing us of the reality of universal brotherhood, as the sudden flush of enthusiasm that follows the words of some great orator, the thrill with which we hear of some noble action, the grief with which we witness another's pain. We read in *Light on the Path* "Kill out all sense of separateness," because "Nothing that is embodied, nothing that is conscious of separation, nothing that is out of the eternal, can aid you." We may endeavor to realize this truth with all the mental power we can bring to bear upon it, meditate upon it for hours, and the sudden swaying of a crowd by some one mighty impulse, or the unexpected revelation of the depths of some human heart, will bring it home to us with a force that makes our intellectual conviction seem a pale and shadowy thing. There was a great spiritual truth in the old myth of the giant Antæus, who regained his strength whenever he touched his mother Earth. To sway the souls of men the poet must fall back upon our common humanity, must make men feel that he is one with them, must give voice to the inarticulate cry of the masses, must speak *from* the people and not *to* the people. It is this working from a common basis, this appeal from one man to his comrades, that makes the inspiration of Walt Whitman's poetry so great and so far-reaching, the intense conviction, in short, of universal brotherhood, that makes him say, in his *Leaves of Grass*:

"Recorders, ages hence!

* * * * * I will tell you what to say of me;

Publish my name and hang up my picture as that of the tenderest lover, * * * who was not proud of his songs, but of the measureless ocean of love within him—and freely poured it forth;" and who wrote to "Him who was crucified:"

We all labor together, transmitting the same charge and succession;

1 Shakespeare wrote: "*One* touch of nature makes the *whole world* kin." We read instead: "One touch of *nature* makes the whole world *kin*."

We few, equals, indifferent of lands, indifferent of times ;

We, inclosers of all continents, all castes—allowers of all theologies ;

* * * * We walk silent among disputes and assertions, but reject not the disputers nor anything that is asserted ;

We hear the bawling and din—we are reached at by divisions, jealousies, recriminations on every side,

They close peremptorily upon us to surround us, my comrade,

Yet we walk unheld, free, the whole earth over, journeying up and down, till we make our ineffaceable mark upon time and the diverse eras,

Till we saturate time and eras, that the men and women of races, ages to come, may prove brethren and lovers, as we are."

And here the great poet strikes the same note touched upon by our President the last time he spoke to us. Because the realization of this dream of universal brotherhood must needs be a thing of the *future*, because we see how far from this true concentration we are, and must be for many centuries to come, perhaps, therefore there is this need that we should "saturate time and eras," as Walt Whitman puts it, that we should "make our ineffaceable mark" upon the age. For this we come together in societies, that each may have his modicum of power reinforced by contact with others; that the reviving breath of another's inspiration may quicken the flame in our own hearts ; that the individual atoms, by their union and common intensity of purpose, shall make up the little mass of leaven that shall one day leaven the whole lump.

But, as was said in one of the papers the other evening, a society can only accomplish what its individual members *will* and *carry out*, and to inspire us to this individual effort I know of nothing more effective than the words of "the good gray poet," among others, these—

"Is reform needed? Is it through you?

The greater the reform needed, the greater the personality you need to accomplish it. * * *

Do you not see how it would serve to have such a Body and Soul that when you enter the crowd, an atmosphere of desire and command enters with you, and every one is impressed with your personality?

* * * * *

Whoever you are! claim your own at any hazard!

These shows of the east and west are tame compared to you ;

These immense meadows, these interminable rivers,—you are immense and interminable as they ;

These furies, elements, storms, motions of Nature, throes of apparent dissolution,—you are he or she who is master or mistress over them,

Master or mistress in your own right over Nature, elements, pain, passion, dissolution."

K. H.

The Story of Ste. Cecile.

In a picture gallery in one of the large cities that border upon the Ohio River there is a group of figures painted in oils and set in a massive copper frame.

The artist's name is unknown, but it is said that upon the overthrow of Maximilian this picture was seized and brought to this country from Mexico.

The painting represents a young and beautiful woman rising from the harp which stands beside her, its strings seeming almost to vibrate from the touch of her fingers. Her rich draperies fall in marvelous folds of sheen and splendor, her golden hair floats like an aureole round her fair shoulders, while her face wears a rapt, seraphic expression as she gazes upon an angel faintly outlined holding a crown above her head. Kneeling at the feet of the woman is a youth in Spanish costume, who is overwhelmed, it would seem, by her glorious beauty. Many, many years ago this painting, reaching from floor to ceiling, stood against the wall of a miserable apartment overlooking the busy streets of the Mexican capital. The sun and air streamed in unhindered through its open windows, and at night the ghostly moonlight fell in mirror-like patches on the bare uneven floor. The brilliant coloring of the picture, now softened and mellowed by time, contrasted strangely with the dinginess and poverty of the room. There were brushes and an easel and all the necessary paraphernalia of an artist's studio, but none of its elegancies; indeed, the room served as lodging room, kitchen, and atelier combined.

Its occupant, the artist, was a Spaniard by birth, of middle age, once handsome, now worn and wasted with disease. He was called a miser by some, by others a spendthrift. A miser because it was known that his work had sold for great sums, yet he lived so meanly; a spendthrift because he gave gold coins to little ragged urchins who climbed the uncertain staircase to look at this wonderful picture of Ste. Cecile. His ambition seemed to have burned itself out in the accomplishment of this his last work, yet no offer, however large, could tempt him to part with it. One bright morning a troop of ragged children clambered up the steps to look at Ste. Cecile and to gather the coin that might be their reward. They crept softly along the gallery that ran outside, and peeped in at the open door, but no sound welcomed them. Then they entered on tiptoe—no one was there. Turning to scamper down again, a groan frightened them out of their wits, until they discovered their benefactor, the painter, lying in one corner upon a couch whose draperies he had torn away in his struggles for air.

Seeing that help was needed, the children clattered hastily down to call assistance. The first person they encountered was a doctor upon his daily

rounds. He was familiar with this quarter of the city and knew something of the poor artist.

Persons noting his eccentricities had said the painter was mad, that his love for a beautiful woman had turned his poor brain. He was sane enough to execute wonderful sketches with palette and brush, he passed in and out silent and alone, he harmed no one, he shunned the world, therefore the world passed by on the other side.

Aware that the painter had not many hours to live, the doctor out of sheer sympathy for his lonely condition tarried by the bedside after having administered restoratives.

Panting for breath the patient turned suddenly and said, "Doctor, do you doubt that souls are created eternal, immortal? Is there any who think that from nothing we came and unto nothing we return?" A shiver ran through his worn frame as he pressed this inquiry. The doctor placed his finger upon his own lip to enjoin silence, fearing that even so slight an exertion would hasten dissolution.

Not heeding the caution the man continued :—

"I must tell you, doctor, I must tell you. I cannot carry this secret with me. Listen! this is not the only existence that I have known."

The doctor smiled.

"Ah, you do not believe this? You think I rave? Doctor, I never saw things clearer than at this moment."

Partly rising he looked wildly around and then whispered, "I was born upon another planet! Sometimes the remembrance of that life is wafted to me in vague whispers, fleeting as a breath, intangible as a dream."

"Yes," said the doctor, "we all have such fancies."

"It is no fancy, doctor. In that land I had a twin soul who had power to bring forth music from reeds and shells, entrancing all with the power of song. The chief condition of existence in that realm is self-abnegation. The penalty for its infringement is banishment to this planet called Earth for a longer or shorter period according to the enormity of the offense."

The incredulous smile of the doctor seemed to urge the man to further confession.

"You wonder, do you not, doctor, that the fairest of earth's beings are soonest blighted? Ah, you do not know that the cleaner the soul upon its arrival here, the less reason has it to become purified by earthly affiction. You cannot know what terrible sins are expiated here upon earth in long, useless, unhappy lives, or, failing in this, are still farther doomed. Oh that I did not know!"

He clasped his thin transparent hands over his piercing black eyes, and then whispered—

"In that land whence I came I yielded to the tempter and dragged down my twin soul into the abyss! Think of that, doctor! A double transgression! Do you wonder they think me mad? She and I forgot the penalty, and we defied the Power that had created us."

He paused and pushed back the damp locks that clustered upon his forehead, and his breathing grew painfully hurried. Soon he resumed: "So aggravated was my offense in thus assisting in the downfall of my twin soul, that upon me was imposed not only the pang of exile but that of remembrance also. This is rarely inflicted upon transgressors, and only when one has involved another soul in ruin. I found after a time that the earth was very beautiful. There was much in it to remind me of my former home in its waving trees, its green meadows and chattering streams, its singing birds and glorious sky. But, alas! I knew that its inhabitants were doomed, even as myself, to become purified through mortal suffering because of the sin of self-love. I knew that the constant warring of these people in accomplishing their own selfish purposes was the blight and bane of their existence. So blind were they that when one of their number, exalted through suffering, rose to a higher life, they lamented, and often rejoiced when one hopelessly given over to evil passed out of sight. It was the old demon of self, always seeking each his own individual happiness."

The doctor again lifted a warning finger, for the painter was growing weaker and his small store of vital force was rapidly passing away. The look and gesture seemed to nerve the dying man to greater effort.

"Let me finish, doctor," he said plaintively. "I had lived upon the earth three or four years as time is reckoned, when I began to feel stirring within me a power which I had possessed in my former existence—that of portraying surrounding objects. My earthly parents were astonished at this extraordinary gift.

Knowing nothing of its source, and thinking its exercise could lead only to the dwarfing of my other and, as they believed, more useful powers which they hoped to turn to their own and to my profit, they denied me every opportunity. They called me indolent, lacking in force and ambition, and sure to come to want. Then I began to work in secret, stealing away and hiding my productions; working under every possible disadvantage through lack of knowing how to use the crude material appointed to the work of this life.

Finally, one who was also doomed to earth and who had likewise struggled to give expression to the divine power within him came to my aid. Shall I ever forget his tender glance, his approving smile? His words of encouragement were as the dews of heaven to the parched and arid desert. He took me gently by the hand, for he was then a gray-haired old man, almost purified from the taint of self, and his skill as a painter was known

throughout every royal household in Christendom. He taught me the use of earthly compounds and revealed to me the rules of art, and bidding me to rely not upon the praise of men, he left me.

Instantly a sense of my great power came upon me. At that time I was a boy of barely twelve years. My parents, won by the words of my venerable friend, no longer hindered my life-work. Was I therefore secure? Alas, no. Other and fiercer struggles I must yet endure. Men reviled my work. Jealousy and envy cast their poison over my fairest creations. Among my detractors were those who said boldly that the work was not mine, that it was that of my master, that a boy could not possibly accomplish what I claimed as my own. I was looked upon as an impostor, and my parents as the abettors of my scheme. Yet having begun, I could not but go on. Nothing else prospered under my hand. Men looked coldly on, yet I wrought when others slept—only in the exercise of my gift did I find one ray of comfort.

In all this weary life not once had I met my twin soul. Never had she who was condemned to this life with me crossed my path. Where, or in what country, was her home I knew not. I wandered from place to place hoping somewhere to hear her sweet voice, to look into those liquid eyes. I listened at church doors and beneath the windows of the rich and to the voices of the street singers, always hoping to hear that divine voice among the floating melodies, but all in vain.

Hope seemed dead within me. What I regarded as my masterpieces remained in my studio unsold. Starvation came and sat by my side, adding its pangs to my already wretched condition.

Then came the wonderful tales of a new world ; a new hope was born within me. I crossed the sea, facing shipwreck and disaster with the thought that possibly in this land of gold and gems I might find the eyes of my beloved.

I knelt at shrines, I prayed to the Mother of God, I kissed the crucifix, I applied my art to the adornment of sacred places, and so began to feel a peace that I had never known. It seemed that so doing I was nearer to her unseen presence.

I was told of a beautiful woman drawing crowds nightly to listen to her marvelous power of song. I was too poor to gain admission to the brilliantly lighted theatre, but I stood without and I heard the ravishing strains. Then, joy of all joy, I knew without beholding her face that the singer was my long-lost twin soul ! I stood so close that I could touch her garments when she entered her carriage. I looked into her eyes, but she only shuddered and drew away from me. The perfume of her breath floated around me. No word did she vouchsafe to me. Oh what anguish I then endured ! Still I haunted her presence, I would not be denied,

until people said that I was mad! I kissed the ground where her rich robes trailed, I gathered the petals that fell from the flowers at her bosom. I painted pictures of her beautiful face, and threw all my skill into the portrayal of her divine form. She was pure as she was beautiful. Men gazed upon the portraits which I painted and offered fabulous sums. Could I sell them? Could such perfection be counted with gold? Listen, doctor, they tried to buy her soul! They were devils! When they could not do this they turned upon her and crushed her with calumny. The earthly vesture of her white soul was too frail to withstand the stroke, and one bright morning the word was wildly circulated that the Queen of Song was dead!

Dead? her probation was ended. She had entered upon that sphere where envy, malice, and self-love could no more enter. I gave thanks upon my knees that this was so: now I looked forward to my own release.

I painted more diligently than before. I scattered with a lavish hand my brightest inspirations, caring not for the gold which now flowed toward me in abundance. Men wondered at my facility; they said that it could not last, that I was burning out my very life. Yet while they talked I threw to them new and startling proofs of what they were now pleased to call my genius.

I could feel that my body was growing weaker while my power increased. They offered me a palace in which to exhibit my art and to carry on my work. I would not accept. My garret was near the sky, and by that much nearer to my twin-soul. I became almost insensible of the needs of the body—my only desire was to complete what I felt was my greatest work, the embodiment of music in its divinest form.

To this I gave unweariedly every faculty of my being. It was not fame, it was not the hope of reward that spurred me on, it was the overwhelming sense that I possessed the power to produce something that would add to the delight of mortals. It was the rekindled flame of unselfish endeavor, the divine spark, and you, doctor, call it Genius!"

Something like a glorified smile broke over the wan features at this point in his story. A youthful look took the place of the painful expression, and his breath became less hurried and gasping.

Stretching forth his long thin arm, he pointed to the picture which covered one side of the miserable apartment, saying:

"Day and night I plied the brush, touching and retouching until I saw my beautiful twin-soul receiving the crown of life upon the canvas before me: almost breathing it seemed, the trembling harp-strings touched by her fingers answering to the breeze that swept my lonely garret. Then I slept.

Exhausted nature had her way. I awoke not until the next day's sun was sinking behind the low hills. My first waking thought was the picture.

There it stood—not as I had left it—but with another figure added to the group in which I recognized myself, now kneeling at her feet—as you see, doctor." He paused a moment and then asked, "Do you think, doctor, that I in the hours of sleep could have added this? I cannot tell; but above our heads still smiled the angel ready to crown my beloved. My work was done. An angel pressed my eyelids, the earthly clogs fell from my wearied limbs, and my soul, free and untrammeled, stood face to face with her whom I loved. Doctor, do not say I was mad; this was real. It was no delusion." The dying man ceased speaking. Gazing long and earnestly with upturned eyes, he at last slowly whispered,

"I behold thy towers, O land of my heart! Sweet are the murmurs of thy streams, but dearer than aught beside is the voice of the Daughter of Song."

Then a Great Shadow passed by, and the earthly tabernacle was dissolved.

M. Sears Brooks.

Reincarnation and Memory.

I.

The question is often asked: If the theory of reincarnation be true, why have we no recollection of any previous life?

It may easily be conceived as possible that we have lived before on this earth, and that memory of the events of that existence has been blotted out. This lapse of memory is a frequent experience of every-day life; in fact, of all our varied experiences from youth to old age we really remember only a few of the most vivid, and can never recall all the details of even these. Indeed, we forget far more than we remember of the details of this present life, and the wonder is not so much how we can remember the few things that are partially retained, but how we can forget so much of experience that passes beyond all possible recovery. There is, no doubt, an absolute registration of every incident and experience in life, but nothing known to us as memory can possibly constitute that registry. The essence of what we designate as memory consists in our ability to recall into the sphere of consciousness past conditions and events, and this ability is seldom in any instance more than partial, and is always fleeting and uncertain. There are, indeed, flashes of memory where an event long forgotten is revived with unusual vividness, and we get the impression that nothing is really lost but that a latent or a passive memory contains them all, waiting only the touch of circumstance to recall them into being. So far as any

legitimate function of memory is concerned, this is a fallacy. The absolute registration of events already referred to involves far more than can be assigned to the function of memory. This must be borne in mind, and we must accurately apprehend just what the word memory means, before we can intelligently discuss the real question under consideration. In other words, when we have carefully considered the fact, the function, and the phenomena of memory, we can easily understand why that which but partially records passing events, and never is able to recall them entire, should be unable to bridge the chasm of perhaps a thousand years and recover the incidents of a previous incarnation. It may, moreover, appear presently that all that escapes memory, all that memory appears temporarily to retain but in time loses, is nevertheless retained elsewhere and carried on from incarnation to incarnation. Let us bear constantly in mind that nothing exists without a cause, and that nothing is ever really lost. If this principle, recognized as everywhere true in physics, be true also in metaphysics and in all human experience, then each human being represents in himself and carries with him all previous experience, and is at any moment of his existence an epitome of all his past. It is, however, quite evident that nothing known to us as memory answers to this epitome, even for the present life.

The experiments in hypnotism have shown that consciousness and experience may exist independent of what we know as memory. An act to be performed at a future time and an exact date is fixed in some way on the sensorium, and the act is performed automatically at the exact time, although memory bears no record of the experience that led to the act. In another case memory may be impressed and confined to definite limits, thus showing that memory is relatively free from experience. Such illustrations might be multiplied indefinitely, to show that memory is not commensurate with all human experience, even in the present life.

As an element in man's being, consciousness is far broader and deeper than memory. Consciousness represents the fact of experience; memory the form and the details. Hence, while the fact remains and an experience once had can never be destroyed, the form and details in which it first appeared may pass away. This fact of experience remains as a precipitated result, and, divested of memory, *i. e.*, of form and details, relations and sensations, constitutes the basic element in Karma. Add to the foregoing considerations the ethical element, or relation to other individuals, giving thus the element of motive, and we have the law of Karma deduced from the elements. In the first instance we have the individual as related to himself; in the second, as related to his fellows. HARIJ.

(*To be continued.*)

The Stream of Thought and Queries.

II.

Practicing for Occult Development.

Several questions have been received on the subject of the best method to be pursued by members of the Theosophical Society for the development of occult powers.

This desire for such development cannot be commended. Such a desire, standing by itself, while seeming to the questioners to be of great importance, is really of the very least consequence for beginners or to the present state of the theosophical movement. The Society was not organized for the purpose of teaching the practise of occult arts, and it has been distinctly stated in a letter from one of the Masters, who are themselves fully acquainted with all the laws of occultism, that our body was never intended to be a hall of occultism or for the training of aspirants to chelaship. But in the face of that declaration and in spite of all that has been said and written in the magazines of the Society, there are numbers of members still thinking that they will be helped in such sort of study and practice, and who have for some time used what leisure they had in endeavoring to cultivate their psychic powers to the exclusion of work upon the lines laid down by the founders of the Society.

Further than this, some of these devoted students have been reading such works upon practical yoga—or Hatha Yoga—as they could procure, and trying to follow the rules laid down, notwithstanding the distinct caution in all such books that the practices should not be pursued by the student unless he has a competent guide and teacher to help and protect him on the way. Now as there are no such guides in the United States—but all here being alike mere tyros, students, or probationers—it is evident that the very first rules have been violated.

All these practices and studies, so long as they are pursued merely for the powers to be developed, will lead to trouble only and greater ignorance. This is not because there is no truth in practical yoga, but solely from the method adopted and the pure selfishness of the aim before the mind.

What, then, is a Sincere Theosophist to do? Shall he or not Practice Yoga?

We answer by saying that the sincere study of the philosophy and rules of Patanjali's Yoga System may be taken up by any theosophist—on one condition. That is that he shall, as a theosophist, try to carry out the fundamental object of the Society—Universal Brotherhood. In no other way can he receive assistance from any source. Altruism must be made the

aim of life, or all practices are absolutely void of lasting effect. We do not speak from a mere theory but from experience; nor do we claim to have perfected altruism in ourselves, but only that, as far as possible, we are trying to make altruism the rule of life.

THE OCCIDENTAL MIND IS NOT FITTED FOR YOGA.

This may be stoutly denied, but what matters it? The fact remains patent to all that among western people there are few persons masters of any part of occult practice. Partial concentration of mind, even—the first step for any practical use of the recondite laws of nature,—is conspicuously absent from our people. Altruism has been for so many centuries a dead letter, and individualism has been so much cultivated, that the soil has become almost barren. Western peoples are not even fitted to attain perfection in Black Magic, which is supposed to be easy to pursue, though in fact not so; but we are able to lay the seeds in this incarnation for further development upon the evil side of our nature in future lives. The practice of altruism as far as we can is the only way in which to avoid suffering in the future.

IF STUDENTS BELIEVE THAT ADEPTS ARE BEHIND THE SOCIETY, THEY SHOULD FOLLOW THEIR ADVICE.

Those aspirants for whom these words are written have been laboring under a mistake. They have entered a society formed by Beings in whose existence they profess belief, and have not acted upon the instructions given, but have selected such portion of those as suited them. The Adepts have distinctly said that occult powers can be obtained, but They have also said that the Society, *which has Their protection and assistance*, is not for occult development, and that the latter cannot be forwarded by Them unless members will preach, teach, and practice Altruism. There is therefore no sort of obligation upon either the Adepts, or the disciples who do know, to help members whose chief aim is occult development. We must deserve before we can desire.

While we are endeavoring to understand and practice altruism, and while spreading broadcast the doctrines given out by the Adepts respecting man, his status, future fate, and right way of living, each theosophist can devote some of his time to daily meditation and concentration, and all of his time to extirpating his faults and vices; when he has made some progress in this, the good karma he may have acquired by working for the cause of Humanity, which is the same as Universal Brotherhood, will help him to get ready to begin occult practices.

WHAT IS THE "DAILY INITIATION"?

It is supposed by some that initiation is always and in every case a set

and solemn occasion for which the candidate is prepared and notified of in advance. While there are some initiations surrounded by such solemnities as these, the daily one, without success in which no aspirant will ever have the chance to try for those that are higher, comes to the disciple with almost each moment. It is met in our relations with our fellows, and in the effects upon us of all the circumstances of life. And if we fail in these, we never get to the point where greater ones are offered. If we cannot bear momentary defeat, or if a chance word that strikes our self-love finds us unprepared, or if we give way to the desire to harshly judge others, or if we remain in ignorance of some of our most apparent faults, we do not build up that knowledge and strength imperatively demanded from whoever is to be master of nature.

It is in the life of every one to have a moment of choice, but that moment is not set for any particular day. It is the sum total of all days; and it may be put off until the day of death, and then it is beyond our power, for the choice has then been fixed by all the acts and thoughts of the lifetime. We are self-doomed at that hour to just the sort of life, body, environment, and tendencies which will best carry out our karma. This is a thing solemn enough, and one that makes the "daily initiation" of the very greatest importance to each earnest student. But all of this has been said before, and it is a pity that students persist in ignoring the good advice they receive.

Do you think that if a Master accepted you He would put you to some strange test? No, He would not, but simply permitting the small events of your life to have their course, the result would determine your standing. *It may be a child's school, but it takes a man to go through it.*

HADJI ERINN.

TEA TABLE TALK.

A correspondent writes: "I was very ill one night, and, at the end of a severe paroxysm of pain, it suddenly seemed to me that the walls of the room and everything about me dissolved and I distinctly saw the stars. It was only for a moment. Then I came back to find my friends in tears about me. They said afterwards they thought I had gone. It was not like an ordinary faint, and was still different from another experience. One night I was half-asleep, when suddenly it seemed as if I were standing at the foot of the bed and saw my body lying there. I wasn't a bit surprised, but the thought went through my mind, 'I'm glad to get rid of *that*.' Whereupon a *Presence* which seemed to be visible at my side as a luminous blue radiance answered my thought with another; 'It is not time.' There seemed to be, for one brief instant, a sort of struggle, and then I was back in the body. What was the blue radiance, and in what did the two experiences differ?"

It is not always possible for one who was not present to know and to precisely read an event, or for one who has not passed through an experience himself to give it an absolutely correct rendering. Even in visible material things, witnesses are found to differ. We can, however, approximate, always supposing that the witness has seen correctly so far as he has seen. In occultism the same rule holds good. According to this account, I should say that the first experience was one of the clairvoyant state. Through extreme weakness, the bodily senses were all temporarily extinguished, or, to put it differently, the vibrations of the physical body were so greatly weakened as to permit those of the inner body to take control. Then the psychic sense, or clairvoyance, was manifested. The same thing occurs with yogis in self-induced trance of the body, the yogi doing for his body temporarily what physical disease did momentarily for the body of the present querist, who appeared as if dead to surrounding friends through the suspended animation of the physical casing. The second experience appears to be an instance of going out of the physical body in the astral body. It is a very instructive instance because the presence of the mind principle in the *linga sarira* or astral principle, and the *duality* of the mind principle, are clearly seen. The lower mind expresses contempt for its casing, joy at physical release. The higher mind, knowing well that Life is the great teacher while Death is only a state of reward for deeds done, replies that the time has not yet come, and it replies *out of a blue radiance*, which we may say here is the magnetic sphere or aura of every Being. Certain students will understand its further meaning and the deep significance of this point, and that the higher mind should speak from it and appear as an external Presence to the lower mind. The "struggle" spoken of was first the mental struggle for adjustment between the two states of mind, and lapsed into, or was merged into, that psycho—physical shock which always attends return into the physical body, just as departure from that body is often attended by a feeling of rending or dissolving. These experiences should enable our correspondent to understand in some measure how an adept may consciously do the same things. Disease often brings about such experiences through a change of the normal vibrations of the physical body, when the astral body is attracted by the currents of the astral light. Being the vehicle of mind, the Mind principle naturally accompanies it. But there is a higher body than this astral body, and it is the vehicle of the higher Mind: this higher body manifested here as "a blue radiance", and all the other principles and their vehicles are different aspects of this one thing.

A short but interesting phrase is found in another letter. "The last PATH was of peculiar interest to us. In it we found the answers to several questions which had occupied our minds, and had been themes of discussion during the last month." In this and in similar incidents the solidarity of the T. S. is shown, and is a sufficient answer to persons who frequently ask what they shall gain by joining it. From a central position it is easily seen that one current of thought prevails at given times among students all over the country, and that many get the answers to this given line of questions through

their inner natures before the printed reply reaches them. This is of great assistance, for it develops intuition and the inner senses, and such development has been greatly helped by the thoughts of the body of students, tending in one direction and producing a great current or force which is used by the more intuitive ones, but which is at the disposal of all alike, without being diminished by use. The mere fact that a number of minds are turned in one direction renders progress in that direction possible, as is so beautifully pointed out in *Gates of Gold.* Moreover, it is our united action as one Body corporate, drawn together by a common impulse and with common aims, that engenders a current which can be used for and by all, without diminishment : it rather increases by such use.

Mention of *Gates of Gold* brings me indirectly to the subject of a letter in our last number. This letter touched upon a trial which has resulted, on the whole, in much good for the T. S., as trials of all kinds do if borne in a brave and generous spirit. This letter was a refreshing one, in many ways, to me, because of its common sense and naturalness. Yet this Department has received one letter, and has been shown another from a prominent and valued theosophist, in which the attitude of our earlier correspondent appears to be misunderstood. It seemed to me that the true theosophic attitude was one wherein we dealt with our neighbor as ourself. We see our fault, we see a part of our motive at least. We condemn our *fault;* often we turn from it in loathing. But we do not wholly condemn *ourselves.* We do not say—"There is no good in me." If we say so, it is only a mental or intellectual utterance, to which we give the lie by going on with life and by expecting, on the whole, good things of ourselves. We do not, therefore, condemn ourselves, but only that act, now grown hateful to us. We admit this, we try to repair it and to kill out all the seeds it may have sown. Now we cannot do better than this by our comrade. There is a fine line between romantic sentimentality and the spirit of isolation, which line we must tread. We tread it by dealing with another as we really deal (not as we think we deal) with ourselves. The mistake in the attitude of my correspondent doubtless lay in an implied belief that in his or her case such fault would not be possible. All faults are possible to every one of us. They lie latent even in the perfected nature. They are the *negative* aspects of nature. Or call them the *evil* or *separate* aspects: the meaning is the same. It is hard to find a word to describe this latent potentiality existing throughout all nature. We never know what we might be under temptation until it has assailed us, and this truth is implied in the Lord's prayer : "Lead us not into temptation." I am glad to have attention called to this point, which I had mentioned earlier, but which was omitted through defective copy. Another objection is that motive cannot be judged. This is true ; it cannot be wholly judged, but it may be ascertained in part, in specific acts, and, when declared, it may be in so far reckoned with. Observe also that it may be declared without that declaration being known to all persons. When all is said and done, however, we do not ourselves know all of our own soul's motive, because that is hidden deeply within the soul, and our comrades can only judge what are the

tendencies of a given motive or act. They must do this to protect themselves and others, and if meantime they hold fast to the spirit of charity and consolidation, no more can be asked. The emotional feeling which avoids all recognition of evil and injurious tendency is as unjust as is the spirit of condemnation. The latter errs chiefly towards one person; the former errs chiefly towards the many.

Another querist says: "The other day I engaged a new office boy. Since then, whenever I have looked at him, I have thought of Arthur. You will remember Arthur is one of the characters in *Tom Brown at Rugby*. This thought kept haunting me. This morning the bill clerk, who has become sort of chummy with him, called him Arthur. How is it that that name kept running in my mind from the day he entered the office until to-day, though I had never heard any but his surname?" The incident is quite natural. His name was in his aura and was sensed unconsciously by the inner man of my querist. We get innumerable ideas thus from the auras of others and never suspect their source. JULIUS.

A CHAT WITH CORRESPONDENTS.

One illustration of the expansion of Theosophical interest through this country is found in the growth of business during the last two years in the joint office of the PATH and the General Secretary of the American Section. In the PATH department, this appears in the new subscriptions from various quarters; in the remittances for books and documents kept on hand or ordered from publishers as needed; and in the subscriptions transmitted to *Lucifer*, the *Theosophist*, and the T. P. S. In the General Secretary's department, it appears in the growing list of members, with the consequent addition to the work of recording such, issuing Diplomas and Charters, and forwarding the Applications and the dues to India; in the increasing official correspondence with Branches and members; in the many requests from outsiders for information and for guidance in reading; in the larger number of cases requiring the issue of circulars or documents to each F. T. S.—involving no small labor in the addressing of wrappers or envelopes; in the occasional supply of items or corrections to the press. And a very large additional work has accrued to the office from (*a*) the preparation and issue of *The Theosophical Forum* each month, (*b*) the establishment of the Theosophical Circulating Library, (*c*) the printing and distribution—thanks to private assistance—of thousands of leaflets or tracts expounding the principles of Theosophy in a popular way. And to all this must be added the great labor accruing to the General Secretary, and unshareable by others, from his new function as Secretary of the * * * Section.

Besides occasional aid from kind friends, the Editor and General Secretary has had the constant presence of one or another volunteer. This proving inadequate to the growing work, he was obliged to secure the permanent services of an office-boy, and, later on, of a stenographer. It was to cover the expense of these that the late Convention authorized an appeal to members. Such, then, is the present staff.

But the work has not ceased its growth. Let us hope and trust that it never will. New openings and opportunities continually present themselves, and must be promptly met. It is not, however, to solicit funds that the present Chat takes place. It is to solicit consideration.

It is evident that in an office with so much and such increasing duty, every time-saving appliance is a necessity. Hence the stenographer and the type-writing machine. Some of our friends dislike this. They wish a sweet note of sympathy direct from the General Secretary's own pen, and the intervention of machinery seems to chill the sympathetic current and dispel the fraternal aroma. But, Brethren, have you any right to expect that office business is to be disordered and important affairs put off in order that you may extort a fancied privilege and nurse a sentimental notion? Is it not more rational and manly (using this word as the antithesis to "childish" rather than to "feminine") to see that the Society's work is of more moment than your fancies, and that truth should have the same value to you whether its words are written or printed? Were the Editor of the PATH and the General Secretary to pen and not dictate answers to the letters received, his present life-work would lie over to his next incarnation.

Another thing. The same exigency of scant time makes imperative the obvious duty of condensed statement. But not a few F. T. S. of both sexes imagine it needful to inform the General Secretary of their varying spiritual moods, of their abounding faith in the Cause, and of their feelings and emotions and anticipations. How can any man read such outpourings; how reply to them? If half a page can state your wants, have you any right to send a sheet? With the utmost desire to give you every help, is it *possible* for the General Secretary to do so otherwise than briefly?

Still another thing,—this time from the editorial side of the duplex rôle. Zealous Theosophists not infrequently send us communications for the PATH. These, with the exception of poetry, are always welcomed. But it does not follow that they can be always used. For, to the publication of any literary matter, there are certain conditions. It must be fresh, readable, instructive, valuable for the end sought. That it should be true is not enough. A friend, hearing a parishioner's comments on the sermons of a well-known clergyman, replied, "But they are true." "Yes," said the parishioner, "that is the trouble; they are *too true.*" An article may be so true as to be truism, so obvious as to be common-place. It may want point or life or finish or *verve*, and hence, to the larger experience of an editor, discerning quickly what is suitable or otherwise for his columns, may not be useful. Be not offended, Brethren, if your offerings, sincere and honest as they undoubtedly are, and prepared with care and love and zeal, fail to appear in type. Therein is no slight to you, for the decision is not personal but judicial, and the judge—in such matters—is wiser than you can be.

In these things, then, and perhaps in others, the Editor and General Secretary asks consideration,—consideration in making letters concise, clear, and explicit, in remembering his many duties and his little time, in recalling the scores of other correspondents with equal claims to attention, in contentment with the brief replies and the mechanical help a busy man finds imperative. In thus exemplifying Practical Theosophy, you will show that you have not joined the Society and read the PATH in vain.

Answers to Questioners.

From L. T.

1. Is there any reason why we should publicly denounce and add to the heavy karma of *anyone* in order to thus defend one who is supposed to be an Adept?

Ans.—A denunciation does not add to any karma but that of the denunciator. If others then take it up, it adds to their bad karma. It does not affect the karma of the one denounced. Karma is action. It is action which makes karma or reaction. The person denounced has not acted, even in thought, hence no karma is produced for him until he does so.

There might be reasons why we should denounce a hidden act of wrong, but these must be rare, because most of what we could do to right the wrong can better be done privately. The case differs greatly when the wrong done is public and published by the doers of it. If we assent to a wrong or to a falsehood by our silence, we practically help on the wrong, and this when we might lighten their karma by limiting the numbers of persons deceived by them, as we do when we speak the Truth. To stand by in silence when a public wrong is done is not true fraternity. In sparing the feelings (perhaps) of the wrong doers, we injure, by our silence, all the great number of brothers who, if we speak for the Truth, have then an opportunity of choosing between the true and the false. The repositories of true knowledge are responsible for their silence in the presence of falsehood if they do not answer those who seek the truth; and this holds good whether the point be a great or a minor one, for Truth is one. Nor does it matter whether the person attacked is an adept or a criminal. If an adept, is he exempt from our fraternity which is universal? If a criminal towards human or divine law, still he is not exempt from that fraternity. By speaking Truth we do justice, not to persons, but to Truth. No consideration of persons, great or small, perfect or imperfect, enters into it. We defend Truth, not persons.

2. In the name of brotherly love, would the adept wish such expensive defense?

Ans.—Do you call it "expensive defense" to speak the Truth when challenged by falsehood? By limiting the evil effects of my Brother's deed I help him to that extent. If I do not, I share his bad karma, I injure numbers of others, and I injure him because I have not helped him to palliate his deed. You limit the idea of fraternity to the one or two persons whose *acts* have demanded a reply and a name, and you ignore practically all those injured by the spread of falsehood. What the adept may or may not wish has nothing to do with the matter. It is a question of our duty, and we put it to our own conscience. We must look to it that we do our duty from our own inner conviction of it; fully that and not a jot more, if all the gods appeared and directed us otherwise. It is impossible to say what an adept might or might not wish in any given case, although it would seem that in virtue of His purified Being, He must wish for Truth. Our concern is not with what He wishes, but with our own duty.

3. Why should we publicly denounce under any circumstances?

Ans.—"Denounce" hardly appears the correct word. In the sense of "to point out as worthy of reprehension or punishment," we should never "denounce." In the sense of "to make known publicly or officially," it

does not apply in this case, where the doers of a deed have published it in the papers and we have only replied to it.

We take it that our questioner means "condemn." There is often grave reason why we should condemn an *act*. There is never any reason why we should condemn a *person*. The difference is radical. When a wrong act is characterized justly, we do not therefore imply that the doer, the person, is not, all the same, capable of manifesting, next moment, the hidden god within him, just as he may have manifested the potential dugpa at some other moment. When we condemn an act, we take no names in vain : we do when we condemn the whole personality *per se*. In this last case we thoroughly impugn the guiding motive of the soul, which is evolution, and not good or evil *per se*. These are the twin aspects of matter ; the soul's aim or motive is beyond them in the unity, and towards that it works through good and evil. We may justly keep silence with regard to wrongs done to ourself, for, by our silence, we arrest all other effects so far as we are able, and return a blessing for a curse, thus lightening the possible Karma of our enemy. While pointing out, in cases made public by the doers, the tendency of an *act*, we have the warrant of Truth, as we have not when we condemn persons.

It is not possible to draw hard and fast lines for all cases, nor is it easy to know our whole duty. If we did know it, we should not be where we are. Only he who attempts to keep the Law unbroken for a single hour while looking at the *universal* aspect of things, knows how difficult is this test. There are endless complexities, duties sadder than death. Not sad in final issue, but sad to our ignorance. One such comes before us when, in order to prevent the misleading of many, it is necessary to inflict upon ourselves and upon the few the pain they have themselves publicly provoked by misrepresentation or other departure from true principles. Yet we can do so fraternally, closing no door of love or of return.

JASPER NIEMAND.

CORRESPONDENCE.

August 12th, 1889.

TO THE EDITOR :

In the August number of THE PATH is an article entitled "The Worship of the Dead," which incidentally discusses the condition in Kama-loka of those taken off untimely by suicide or accident. Does the law affect in the same way those who die in early life of disease ?

* *

Ans.—We think that those who "die in early life of disease" may be said to have reached their natural limit of life, and that all their "principles" had been separated so as to prevent the fate of the others spoken of. The life of an individual is the expression of his Karma in action ; in the case of suicide or accident—both of which are the sudden cutting off of a fixed term—the lower principles have not separated, while in death from disease the natural term of life is fixed by Karma at the limit when death occurs from the disease.—(ED.)

NOTICE.

LETTERS THAT HAVE HELPED ME will be continued in October PATH.

Theosophical Activities.

AMERICA.

VISITS BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY.

CLEVELAND.—On the 29th of July Mr. William Q. Judge visited the Cleveland Theosophists. A large meeting was held at the house of Dr. Salisbury near Cleveland. About 60 persons were present and listened for three hours to a talk on Theosophy and questions and replies upon the same subject. The greatest interest in Theosophy was manifested.

CHICAGO.—Chicago was reached on the 1st of August, and several meetings were held at the house of Dr. Phelon, President of the Ramayana T. S. At one of these about 25 persons were present. Several visits were also made to Theosophists who could not come to the meeting.

OMAHA.—At Omaha two public meetings of the Vedanta T. S. of that city were held in Sheeley Block. The room was crowded on each occasion, and the patience of the audience in listening quietly to a full exposition of Theosophical ideas showed their interest in the subject. Dr. M. J. Gahan was present from Grand Island, and made some remarks. The daily papers of Omaha gave full accounts of the meeting. Several private meetings of the Branch were also held on other days. What seemed to attract the attention of the newspapers was Mr. Judge's declaration that the American people were reincarnations of the great nations who dwelt on this continent ages ago, and that this country was destined to be the cradle of the new race as stated by Madame Blavatsky.

GRAND ISLAND, NEB.—On the 7th of August a public meeting of the Nirvana T. S. was held at Masonic Hall in that city to listen to an address by Mr. William Q. Judge upon "What Theosophy is and What it is not." Over a hundred persons were present and listened attentively from 8 o'clock until 10.30. Previous to this meeting Theosophy had been called in Grand Island "Dr. Gahan's New Religion," as he is the President of the Branch and the most active member of it. The tract called "Karma as a Cure for Trouble" has been republished in the papers by members of the Branch.

KANSAS CITY.—On August 12th a meeting of the Theosophists here was held to consult with Mr. William Q. Judge about forming a new Branch, and it is expected that very soon one will be organized there with the name of "Kansas City Theosophical Society."

ST. LOUIS.—There is considerable interest in Theosophy in St. Louis, and, notwithstanding the vacation, members of the two active Branches there, Pranava and Arjuna T. S., met Mr. William Q. Judge at the houses of the members and held a joint meeting at the rooms of Arjuna T. S., when Brother Judge talked at some length upon Theosophy and the best method for Branch work, after which general conversation followed. It was found that some of the old charges against Madame Blavatsky, raked up from the past 14 years, with decorative additions, were being circulated in St. Louis, but with little, if any, effect.

CINCINNATI.—The Branch here is in vacation, but several members came together at Dr. Buck's house for the purpose of having a Theosophical conversation.

The visit, which was made as far as the centre of Nebraska by the General Secretary, showed that the Branches are rapidly learning how to carry on Theosophical work, and that the movement has spread with astonishing vigor and is reaching large bodies of people who hitherto had never heard of Theosophy, and whenever the subject comes before them the

greatest interest is manifested. The most useful Branches are those that do active work in laying Theosophical literature before the public, in opening small libraries in which Theosophical books can be found, in inducing the public libraries to put Theosophical literature on their shelves, and in general working for the good of other people in this field. Those members who have taken up this course testify that it has been also of great benefit to themselves.

The General Secretary had intended to visit the Pacific Coast, where there are several good Branches and very great vigor, but in consequence of the season and pressing business engagements he was unable to do so, much to his regret.

It is being mooted on the Pacific Coast to have a convention there *ad interim* for the purpose of mutual-aid discussions of methods for Theosophical work and the election of a delegate to attend the regular Convention. It is hoped that this may be accomplished.

NEW BRANCH, SAN DIEGO, CAL.—A charter for a new Branch to be called *Gautama T. S.*, located at San Diego, has been issued August 21st, 1889, to George H. Stebbins, Vera M. Beane, Stella B. Rotnor, T. B. H. Stenhouse, and Sewell Seaton.

GOLDEN GATE LODGE of San Francisco now holds 8 Public Meetings each month, —4 at San Francisco in a public Hall, and 4 in Oakland. The open meetings held at S. F. are advertised in the daily press, and a good attendance is the result. Original papers are prepared by members of the Branch and read at these meetings, followed by questions and answers relating to subject treated upon in paper. Dr. J. A. Anderson read a paper upon "The Hereditary Problem," and Miss M. A. Walsh delivered a very interesting lecture at another meeting; subject, "Do we remember past Incarnations." Dr. Allen Griffiths read a paper on "Personality and Individuality a Theosophical Distinction," and Mr. E. M. Poole an essay upon "Theosophy," both having large and attentive audiences. There is much interest being awakened in Theosophical matters by these meetings, which are growing in numbers and interest. Open meetings are held on each Sunday evening at Oakland and conducted in the same manner. Free discussion is invited and all argument is discouraged.

MEMBERS OF THE T. S. are invited to write in their Catalogues of the Theosophical Circulating Library the following additional books; No 98, Occult Science in India, by Jacolliot; No. 99, Seraphita, by Balzac; No. 100, The Magic Skin, by Balzac.

INDIA.

COL. OLCOTT returned from Japan to Ceylon on the 19th of June, and was expected at Adyar on the first of July. A meeting was held in Ceylon in the Theosophical Hall at which the high priest Rev. Sumangala presided. An address of welcome to Col. Olcott was read. The Colonel said that he had had a very encouraging and pleasant journey in Japan; that he had been away 5 months from India. He was in Japan 107 days, travelling from Sandai in the north to the extreme south of the empire, and visiting 33 towns. In Yeddo, the capital, there are 1,200,000 Buddhists, out of 37 millions in the whole of the empire who are nominally Buddhists. On arriving in Japan he called together the chief priests of the 8 sects, who appointed a joint committee to arrange his tour. 12,000 rupees were collected by them for expenses, and the committee travelled with him all over Japan. During the 107 days of his stay there he delivered 76 public addresses, and the audience at each were estimated at 2,500. Many medals were presented to him by various Japanese societies who had elected him an honorary member, and three Japanese gentlemen were sent back with him to study the Pali language from the high priest. When he left Japan the High Priests all

came together again for a farewell meeting, and they gave him a Sanscrit letter in reply to that from the high priest Sumangala of Ceylon.

It is 2 300 years since the quarrel arose between the northern and the southern churches, and this tour of Col Olcott's is a great event which will result no doubt in immense benefit to Buddhists. The Sanscrit letter is one of friendship from the north to the south, and, as is customary with complimentary letters, the letter is tied with strings of paper made of two colors. The Japanese also presented to the Colonel the imperial flag to be taken to the Theosophists in India, and the Colonel also said that the Buddhist flag which the Theosophical Society, under his efforts, had caused to be adopted in India has also been adopted in Japan where he found it flying. Amongst other demonstrations there was a display of fireworks in Japan, where a bomb was exploded high up in the air and burst into the Buddhist flag fluttering in the breeze. The Colonel also brought back with him religious paintings and pictures, one of them 800 years old.

After the Colonel had spoken Mr. Kawakami spoke on behalf of the Japanese, and another Japanese priest followed with a few remarks full of friendship and love. The high priest Sumangala closed the meeting and praised Col. Olcott, hoping that the relations established between the northern and southern churches would be continued, and that it was the commencement of a real spiritual communion between all Buddhist countries.

IRELAND.

THE DUBLIN LODGE only had one public meeting during July, having suspended its regular open meetings for the summer. At the meeting in question Mr. J. A. Cree read an excellent paper on "Ideals of Life ; and their fulfilment in Prayer, Mysticism, and Poetry." The members have not, however, slackened their exertions during the summer, and the Lodge literature is being dispersed on all sides, with good effect.

Dublin, August 12, 1889.

LITERARY NOTES.

THE THEOSOPHICAL REVIEW (Paris) for July is a most admirable number. The continuation of Madame Blavatsky's article, The Beacon of the Unknown, contains the following interesting statement. "'The disciples (Lanoos) of the law of the *Diamond Heart* must help one another in their studies. The grammarian will be at the service of him who seeks the soul of the metals (chemist) etc., etc.' (Catechism of the Gupta Vidya). The profane would laugh were they told that in the Occult Sciences an alchemist can be useful to a philologist, and *vice versâ*. They would understand better, perhaps, if told that by these nouns (grammarian, or philologist) we mean him who studies the universal language of Symbolism ; although only the members of the T. S. * * * Section can clearly understand what the term philologist means in this sense All corresponds and naturally unites in nature In its abstract sense, Theosophy is the white ray from which are born the seven colors of the solar prism, each human being assimilating some one of these rays more than he does the six others. It follows that seven persons, each provided with his special ray, can mutually assist one another. Having the septenary branch at their service, they can thus dispose of the seven forces of nature. But it also follows that, in order to arrive at this end, *the choice* of the seven persons suitable to form such a group must be left to an expert, to an initiate in Occult Science." Other articles are Fragments of a novel on the Latin Decadence, by Peladin, and The Seven Principles of Man from a scientific standpoint, by Papus, a most valuable and clear exposition, well illustrated. Translations of *The Gates of Gold* and of *The Secret Doctrine* follow ; a scholarly article on Chinese classics, by Amaravella, is

very interesting, and the number closes with a thrilling sonnet on Initiation (Caminade) and the usual reviews and notices.

TWIXT HEAVEN AND EARTH, by Mrs. Sidney Rosenfeld (*United Service Pub. Co.*) is another novel full of theosophical ideas. It is dedicated to an F. T. S. The scene is laid in Washington and the plot deals with hypnotism chiefly, the hypnotiser being a person of a malignant nature which finally causes his downfall and death. While we do not agree with all there is in the book, we hail its appearance with pleasure, for if the lofty ideas of its heroine were carried into practice by all theosophists, great results would speedily follow.

THE COMING CREED OF THE WORLD, by Frederick Gerhard. (*W. H. Thompson, 404 Arch St., Philadelphia, $2.00.*) This book, of 526 pages, tries to show that there is a better religion than Christianity; it is distinctly antichristian, and evinces a great deal of labor on the author's part but we do not find in it "the coming creed." It is evident that the writer is a student of religious history, upon which he has drawn very largely; he is for religion and not against it; he thinks that at last all will unite to honor God. This book, the result of forty years' research and put forth by the author in his old age, is not dreary nor is it deeply philosophical, but meant for ordinary minds who do not like the christian dogmas. However, we cannot help thinking that nowadays there exists no such thing as Christianity to fight against; we now live under a barbarous materialism clothed in hypocrisy.

We have received "The Buddhist" *en bloc*, as one may say, 15 numbers in a batch. It is the English supplement to the *Sarasavisandaresa* of Ceylon. It contains a series of "Studies in Buddhism" by the distinguished A. P. Sinnett, another on "Karma, Heaven, Hell, and Rebirth" by a Siamese Prince, various articles explanatory of Buddhist doctrine, a poetical translation of Chap. I of *The Dhammapada*, written expressly for *The Buddhist* by Sir Edwin Arnold, accounts of Col. Olcott's tour in Japan and Ceylon, and the full text of his paper on "The History of Princess Sanghamitta" read by him before the Women's Educational Association of Ceylon on June 27th. It was this Princess who brought to Ceylon a branch of the sacred Bo-tree, which branch became a tree now 2,200 years old and in full vigor. Interesting examples are given of the union of Buddhists and Hindus under the influence of the Theosophical Society,—a thing hitherto unknown in Ceylon; and the growing interest in the festival of "Wesak", the birthday of Gautama Buddha, shows the revival of Buddhist religious feeling. An American lady contributes one stanza of an unfinished hymn upon "Wesak" by her husband,—a devout man, we should judge, though perhaps not a poet. The subscription is $1.75 per year.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BRANCH T. S. WORK.

QUESTIONS AND SUGGESTIONS RELATIVE HERETO CAN BE SENT CARE OF "PATH."

VI.

It is the purpose and endeavor of this department to select for discussion each month that subject which appears to be attracting the most attention from the greatest number of Theosophists and Theosophical Magazines.

The Law of Cycles applies to the domain of Thought as well as to the manifestations of nature, and there seems to be some influence operating upon the majority of minds which calls attention at certain times more particularly to some one point in the Realms of Theosophic Thought. A search through the latest numbers of *Lucifer* and THE PATH will show us

that the chief point of resemblance between the two magazines is in those articles having for their object the arousing of Theosophists to the importance of combined and immediate *practical action.* "Hiding Theosophy under a Bushel," July PATH; "What are you Doing for Theosophy," August PATH; "Practical Work for Theosophists," *Lucifer* of June, etc., etc.: these articles were all called forth by an actual want, the existence of which is only too apparent.

The cause and solution of the difficulty, which dates from the birth of the Society, are equally easy to point out. The cause is *selfishness;* and the solution will only be reached when each of us takes more to heart the needs of his fellows, and works for them instead of for himself.

With a few prominent exceptions people join the Society and remain in it for their own benefit. This is not only untheosophical, but is opposed to the very reasons for which the Society was organized. The most important object of the Society is its first, *i. e.*, "to form the nucleus of an Universal Brotherhood of Humanity;" and of the three it is that which receives the least support from the majority of its members.

It is true that good work and important work is being done, but it is confined to three or four centers, and is due usually to the exertions of some few individuals.

Theosophists do not, and it seems cannot, be made to realize the paramount importance, aye, *necessity*, of turning their attention and efforts from their own particular selves and concentrating them upon others. No real or permanent advancement can be made by pursuing a selfish course; all such must come through a disinterested effort for others, and with the present means at their command there is no reason why every member of the Society should not perform his or her quota of work.

For those whose natural gifts enable them to write upon Theosophical subjects, there is a large field open. The General Secretary will be glad to forward articles where they will do most good, for it is not always that a branch has amongst its members even one who is capable of writing, and that branch is necessarily at a disadvantage and in need of just such help. Subjects of current and practical interest may be selected, or, if that be beyond the powers of the writer, let him examine the standard works and choose from them portions bearing upon a certain point, string these together, and make an article that cannot help but be instructive. Then there are new branches, where, even if literary talent exists, the members are not sufficiently familiar with the doctrines to trust themselves on paper. They also need assistance.

Although the field of labour for those unable to write is contracted, yet it is larger than they may think. Much good has been done lately by the dissemination of Theosophical Tracts and the spreading of the Literature of the Society.

It must not be forgotten that the Theosophical movement is governed by law, as is everything else, and we are told that the occult influence behind it only lasts for a certain term of years. It is shown, therefore, how important it is for everyone to be given a chance, which, if his nature has reached the proper degree of advancement, is all he needs to have opened before him the glorious truths of the Wisdom Religion. If there be at the end of this period some who have never had the opportunity to study The-

osophy, the fault and Karma will be ours, for to us is entrusted the task of spreading it.

There are several of these tracts that are sold very cheaply, and we do not believe there is one member who is too poor, or who could not if he would, purchase and distribute some of them.

A society such as ours is of course always in need of money. Here is an easy and pleasant means offered our rich members of doing good, but as there is a peculiar Karma attached to such gifts, of this we will not write further.

But how many of us can truthfully answer "Yes" to the self-questioning, "Do I do all I can? Do I give as much time, work, and money to the cause as I can spare from my more imperative duties?" That is the view the true Theosophist takes, and unless his answer is satisfactory, his work does not content him.

Oh! if Theosophists could only be made to understand how important, beyond all powers of description, it is for them to *work!* Do *anything*, so that it helps others; and that will help you more, a hundred times, than if the same efforts were expended upon yourself. It requires no sacrifice other than a little effort, a little trouble, and still less money, and yet the good that may result from such endeavor is incalculable.

If anyone who reads this article will write to this Department, telling what he is willing and able to do, opportunities for him to demonstrate his usefulness will be forthcoming. No one need know him, and his reward will be in the thought that through him was some benighted brother taught the supreme need of an altruistic life and the spiritual beauties of Theosophy.

"I would I could give reasons so strong, so overwhelming, in favour of the great future, that the pitiable plea of present necessity would quail before them." * * * G. Hijo.

We are requested to publish the following.

THE MAGNETIC CONGRESS IN PARIS.

Magnetism's partisans of all the schools have decided that an international congress, in order to study the magnetism being adapted to sick persons' alleviations or recovery, will be assembled in Paris, from the 21st to the 27th next October. Amongst members of Committee are to be remarked M. M. l' abbé de Meissas, le comte de Constantin, docteur Puel, Huguet, Gérard, Chazarin, etc.

Subscriptions, fixed to fr. 10, will give a right of participating to the different labors of the congress and receiving publications and reports. Adhesions, memoirs, attestations must be addressed before the 1st October to Mr. Millien, secrétaire général, place de la Nation, N. 13, or to Journal du Magnétisme, 23 Rue Saint Merri.

Into the north-land have gone the gods, where they await the coming of the new race who can hold the azure blossom.—*Lapland Verse.*

OM.